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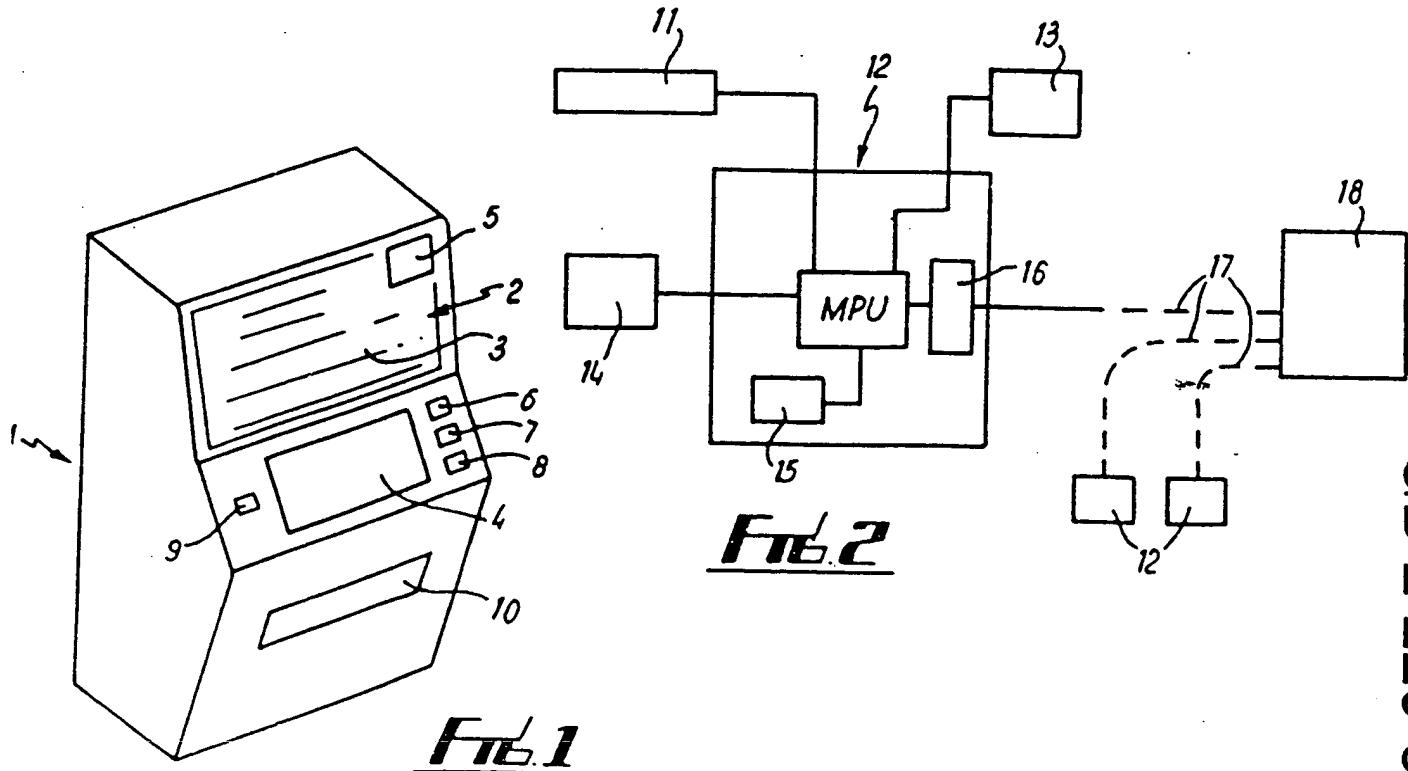
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(58) Field of search

UK CL (Edition J) G4T TAE TAX TBX, G4V VAA
VBK V118 V119
INT CL^a A63F, G07F

(54) Gaming apparatus or system

(57) A betting system comprises a database of information (18) relating to a number of past, completed competitive events, the information including a list of competitors and the outcome of the event. A user control (6) is provided which enables a user both to select an event and a competitor from such event from a list presented on a display screen (4). A further control (7) is provided with which a user can select his stake and place a bet. The outcome of the event is displayed to the user on the screen (4) and, if successful, his winnings are paid to him.



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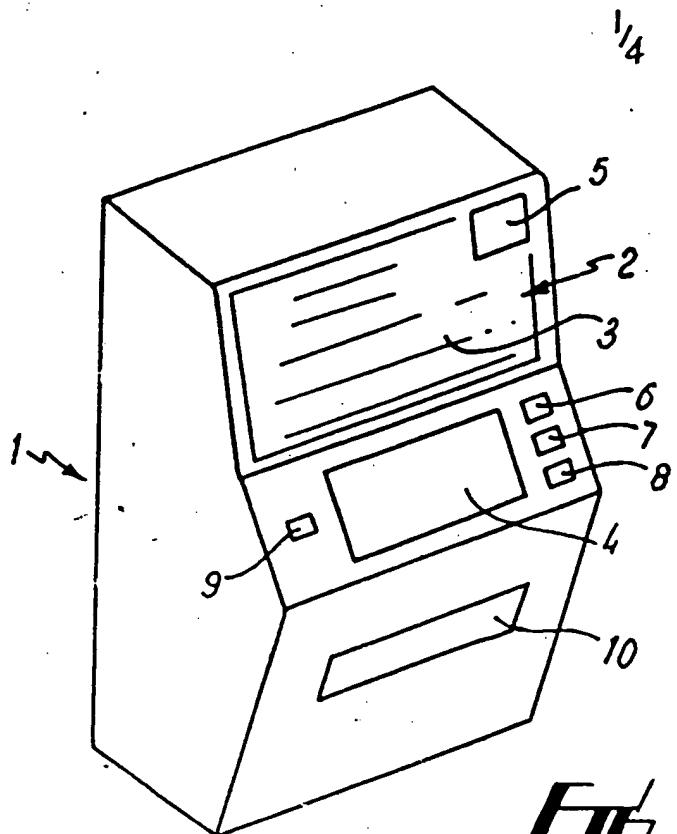


Fig. 1

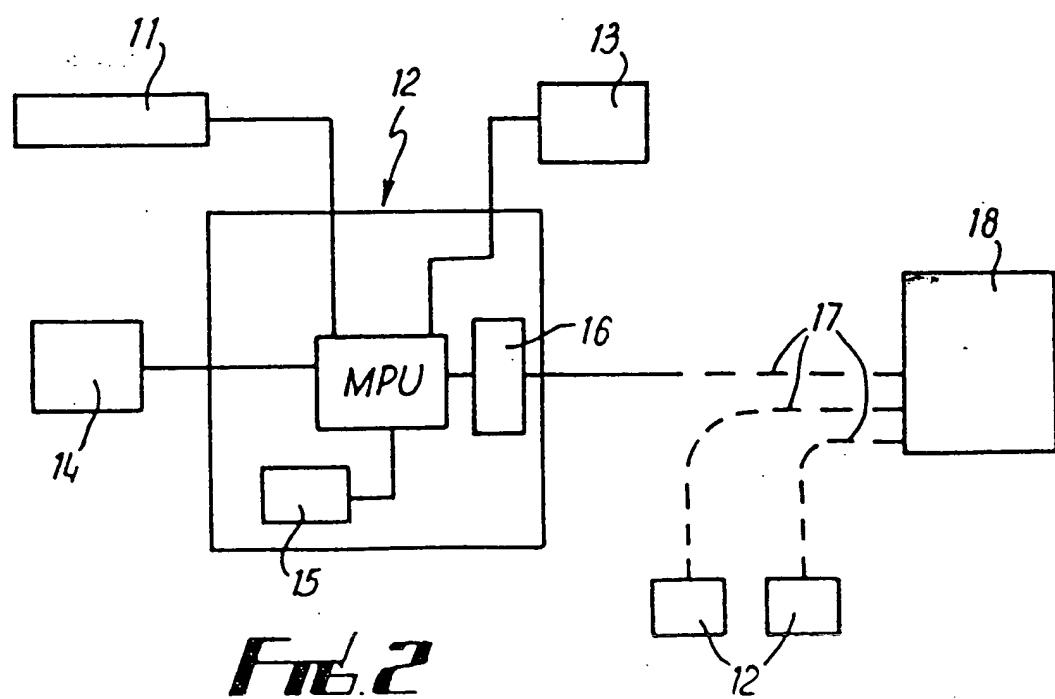


Fig. 2

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HURDLE 2M GOING-GOOD		STAKE	
1	G...	6...	3-1
2	L...	5...	4-1
3	S...	5...	5-1 20P
4	L...	1...	5-2
5	I...	1...	11-1
6	L...	1...	20-1 10P
7	S...	1...	2-1 50P
8	L...	1...	7-1

Start Race Time CREDIT £ ...

20 19

Fig. 3

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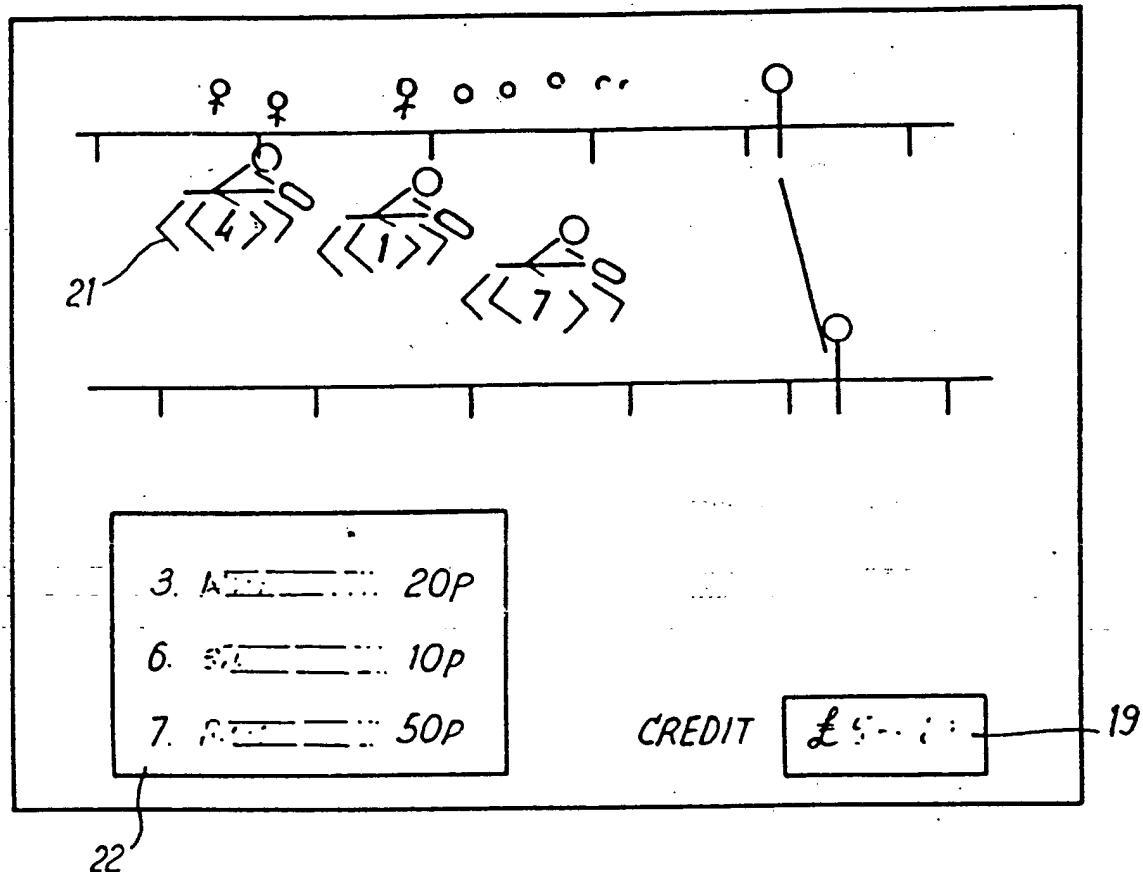


Fig. 4

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(RESULTS)

(-----)

1ST	7	T-----	2-1
2ND	1	S-----	3-1
3RD	4	R-----	5-2

3. T----- 20P	WINNINGS £-----
6. M----- 10P	
7. S----- 50P	WIN
CREDIT £-----	

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BETTING SYSTEM

This invention relates to a betting system.

Bets are placed at betting establishments on competitive events, such as horse races, which have not yet taken place or which have 5 not yet been completed or for which the outcome has not yet been ascertained at the time when the bet is placed. With this procedure, if a competitive event is cancelled, for example due to adverse weather conditions, betting activity of punters is correspondingly curtailed.

An object of the present invention is to provide an acceptable 10 betting procedure which does not necessitate betting on future competitive events.

According to the invention therefore a betting system comprises a database containing information relating to a plurality of past, completed 15 competitive events, said information for each event including a list of contestants and an outcome of the event, means for selecting one said event, means for presenting to a punter or punters the list of contestants relating to the selected said event, means for recording a bet or bets placed on the outcome of the event, and means for presenting the outcome of the event at least to a punter or punters who has placed a 20 recorded said bet.

With this arrangement, opportunities for betting can be made available as and when desired, and, in so far as such opportunities are based on actual past competitive activities, the level of interest, and unpredictability, to the punter, can be comparable with that derived 25 from betting on an actual future competitive event.

To ensure adequate unpredictability, the information presented preferably does not include identification of the event, at least until

the bet or bets have been placed and recorded. Information identifying the event may be presented together with or subsequent to presentation of the outcome information.

5 The competitive event may be a horse race or any other suitable sporting or similar event.

The means for selecting an event may comprise a computer device or other arrangement which acts to select information from the database at random or in accordance with a predetermined sequence or pattern as desired. The means for presenting the list of contestants may 10 comprise a VDU screen or a printer or any other suitable device. The means for presenting the outcome may also comprise a VDU or printer or any other suitable device the same as or different from any such device used to present the list of contestants.

15 The database may be adjacent to (or integrated with) the means for presentation of the list of contestants and the means for presentation of the outcome. Alternatively, such means and the database may be remotely interconnected via any suitable linkage such as a radiation link, a telephone line link or the like. Where a remote linkage is used the connection may be real-time or alternatively, and preferably, a 20 memory device may be provided local to the said presentation means, said device being arranged to store transferred information relating to one event, or a batch of information relating to a plurality of events. Where a batch of information is stored said selection means includes 25 means for selecting from such batch (at random or in a predetermined pattern or sequence) in addition to means as mentioned above for selecting from the database.

The means for presentation may be of a communal nature whereby for example a group of people in a betting establishment can see the information on a wall mounted screen or the like. Alternatively, the presentation may be of a more restricted nature whereby the information 5 is presented primarily to one person or a small group of people for example on a screen mounted in a floor-standing cabinet or other similar arrangement.

With regard to the selection of the said one event, this may be effected automatically in accordance with a predetermined pattern e.g. 10 at regular intervals. Alternatively the selection may be effected under the control of an authorised person, such as an employee of a betting establishment in which the system is used, or where the database is at a remote location, by an employee associated with such remote location.

A further possibility is for the selection to be made in response to an 15 initiating action of a punter, for example, when such punter operates a control system to signify that he wishes to place a bet.

With regard to the placing and recordal of the bet this may be controlled by an authorised person such as an employee of a betting establishment where the system is used e.g. involving issuance of a 20 betting slip or the like. Alternatively this may be effected automatically for example by insertion of coins or tokens or notes into a receiving mechanism by a punter. Similarly any pay-out made to the punter (in coins or tokens or notes or vouchers) as a consequence of a winning bet may be controlled by an authorised person or may be made 25 automatically by a pay-out mechanism.

In one embodiment of the invention, the betting system comprises

a punter-operable machine, such machine incorporating said means for presentation of the contestant list and the outcome information, said database (or the above mentioned memory device), punter-operable controls, a coin- (or token- or note-) mechanism, a pay-out mechanism,
5 and a control system incorporating all or part of said selection means for selection from said database or from said memory device as appropriate.

In an alternative embodiment of the invention, the betting system is adapted to be used in a betting establishment and incorporates at
10 said location said presentation means at a prominent display position e.g. on a wall of the establishment, said database (or the above mentioned memory device), operator controls, and a control system incorporating all or part of said selection means for selection from said database or from said memory-device as appropriate.

15 The invention will now be described further by way of example only and with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Fig. 1 is a diagrammatic perspective view of a betting machine forming part of one form of a betting system according to the invention;

Fig. 2 is a schematic block circuit diagram of the machine;
20 and

Figs. 3-5 show representations of typical display presentations of the machine.

Referring now to the drawings, Fig. 1 shows a betting machine comprising a floor standing cabinet 1 having a front wall 2 having
25 therein an upper glass panel 3 and beneath this a colour VDU screen 4.

The upper glass panel 3 is back illuminated and is screen printed with instructions and decorative matter. There is a coin slot 5 in one corner of this panel.

Alongside the VDU screen 4 there are various controls 6 - 9 in 5 the form of press buttons.

Under the VDU screen 4 in the front wall there is a pay-out outlet 10.

Within the cabinet 1, the screen 4, press buttons 6 - 9, and back illumination lamps 11 are connected to a microprocessor-based control 10 system 12 (see Fig. 2). The coin slot 5 and the pay-out outlet 10 communicate respectively with a coin mechanism 13 and a pay-out mechanism 14, both of which mechanisms are connected to the control system 12.

The control system includes memory storage 15 of any suitable 15 kind and also a modem 16 which is connected to a telephone line 17 for communication with a database 18 at a remote central location. This arrangement is such that data can be obtained from the remote database 18 and stored in the internal memory 15.

The database 18 contains information relating to a large number of 20 actual, past competitive events such as horse races, such information for each event includes: a list of contestants (e.g. the names of horses), details of the contestants (e.g. records of past wins, name of rider etc.), details of the nature of the event (e.g. type, distance and going of a horse race), betting odds, details of the outcome of the 25 event (e.g. the winner and runners-up or the order of finishing for all the horses), and the identification of the event (e.g. location, time

and date of the race).

Such information relating to one or several events is transferred from the database 18 to the control system memory 15 via the telephone link 17 and the modem 16. This may occur periodically as initiated at 5 the remote database 18 or at the machine, e.g. at a predetermined time overnight, or on some other timed basis. Alternatively, the transfer of information may occur as and when required in response to operation of the machine by a punter or when all information stored in the memory 15 has been used in betting procedures yet to be described.

10 The transferred information may be selected at random from the database 18 e.g. under the control of a computer system associated with the database 18.

The database 18 may be uniquely linked to the machine. Alternatively the database 18 may be linked to a plurality of similar 15 machines at the same or different locations, as indicated in Fig. 2. Where multiple machines are linked to the same database 18 the same information may be transferred to a plurality of machines or alternatively, different information may be transferred to different machines.

The control system 12 operates to produce a display on the VDU 20 screen 4. This can function in an 'attract' mode in which images, information and the like are displayed to attract a potential punter.

When a punter inserts an appropriate coin or token into the coin mechanism 5 the machine is actuated for a betting procedure. The information relating to a particular competitive event is accessed in the 25 memory 15, such information being selected at random or in a predetermined sequence from the information stored in the memory 15.

The screen 4 then displays the list of contestants, the details relating to the contestants and the race, and the betting odds, as shown in Fig. 3.

The punter presses one of the buttons 6 to select one of the 5 contestants, and then he presses another button 7 to select his stake. The selected stake is deducted from the credit which he has accumulated by insertion of coins/tokens into the machine and by winnings from any previous betting procedure, as shown on a credit display 19.

The punter has a predetermined time to make his selection as 10 indicated by a timing display 20. If he does not make a selection in good time, the race automatically starts with a predetermined minimum bet placed on the favourite. If he does make his selection in time he is invited to press a start button 8 to commence the race.

The race then proceeds in simulated manner by showing graphic 15 representations of the contestants 21 moving across the screen, as shown in Fig. 4. The race is compressed into a short time, say 10 - 15 seconds and during this time the punter's selections are shown on the screen in the form of a simulated betting slip 22.

At the end of the race the outcome is shown on the screen 4 20 together with, for the first time, the identity of the race (its location, time, date), as shown in Fig. 5. Any win is indicated on the screen and the value of the win is added to the credit display 19. When desired the punter can obtain a pay-out equal to the displayed credit value by pressing a pay-out button 9.

25 The accessed information can now be cancelled and the machine is ready for a subsequent betting procedure using information relating to

another event as stored in the memory 15.

With this arrangement, a punter can be presented with a betting opportunity which closely simulates betting on a future competitive event.

It is of course to be understood that the invention is not intended 5 to be restricted to the details of the above embodiment. Thus, although the invention is described in relation to a punter-operable machine it is also possible to utilise the invention in a betting establishment in close simulation of a conventional betting procedure. In this case, the screen 4 could be the usual wall-mounted screen on which race information 10 and results are normally displayed, and, rather than inserting coins into a coin mechanism, bets could be placed and recorded in conventional manner with betting slips.

Further, on the screen shown in Figs. 4 and 5 further information may be shown, for example the odds. Also provision may be made for 15 dealing with bets of a more complicated nature than those described herein.

Moreover, although reference is made to a coin mechanism, it is possible to use a mechanism operated by tokens, notes or cards or the like. In particular, it is possible to use a card (or other device) 20 which has magnetic (or other) storage which can be read by a suitable reader. Thus a card of the 'credit card' kind with a magnetic surface or stripe may be used. In addition to reading to the device, there may also be provision for writing. Thus it is possible to use a system whereby credit on the card is used up by placing bets and any wins 25 may be added to the card for subsequent remuneration as appropriate e.g. as described in our copending application of even date.

CLAIMS

1. A betting system comprising a database containing information relating to a plurality of past, completed competitive events, said information for each event including a list of contestants and an outcome of the event, means for selecting one said event, means for presenting to a punter or punters the list of contestants relating to the selected said event, means for recording a bet or bets placed on the outcome of the event, and means for presenting the outcome of the event at least to a punter or punters who has placed a recorded said bet.

2. A betting system according to claim 1 wherein said means for selecting an event comprises a computer device which acts to select information from the database at random or in accordance with a predetermined sequence or pattern.

3. A betting system according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein said means for presenting the list of contestants comprises a VDU screen.

4. A betting system according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein said means for presenting the list of contestants comprises a printer.

5. A betting system according to any one of claims 1 to 4 wherein said means for presenting the outcome comprises a VDU screen.

6. A betting system according to any one of claims 1 to

5 wherein said database is adjacent to (or integrated with) said means for presentation of the outcome and said means for presentation of the list of contestants.

7. A betting system according to any one of claims 1 to
5 5 wherein said means for presentation of the outcome and said means for presentation of the list of contestants and said database are interconnected via a remote link.

8. A betting system according to claim 7 wherein said remote link comprises a radiation link.

10 9. A betting system according to claim 7 wherein said remote link comprises a telephone link.

10. A betting system according to any one of claims 7 to 9 wherein said remote connection is real-time.

11. A betting system according to any one of claims 7 to 15 9 wherein a memory device is provided local to the said presentation means, said device being arranged to store transferred information relating to one event or a batch of information relating to a plurality of events.

12. A betting system according to claim 11 wherein said 20 selection means includes means for selecting from such batch (at random or in a predetermined pattern or sequence) in addition to means for selecting from the database.

13. A betting system according to any one of claims 1 to 25 12 wherein said means for presentation comprises a wall mounted screen.

14. A betting system according to any one of claims 1 to 12 wherein said means for presentation comprises a screen mounted in a floor standing cabinet.
15. A betting system according to any one of claims 1 to 5 14 wherein said means for selecting one said event is operable to effect said selection in accordance with a predetermined pattern.
16. A betting system according to any one of claims 1 to 14 wherein said means for selecting one said event is 10 operable to effect said selection under the control of an authorised person, such as by an employee associated with the location where the system is used.
17. A betting system according to any one of claims 1 to 14 wherein said means for selecting one said event is 15 operable to effect said selection in response to an initiating action of a punter.
18. A betting system according to claim 17 wherein said initiating action of a punter comprises operating a control system to signify that he wishes to place a bet.
- 20 19. A betting system according to any one of claims 1 to 18 wherein said means for recording a bet is controlled by an authorised person, such as by an employee associated with the location where the system is used.
20. A betting system according to any one of claims 1 to 25 18 wherein said means for recording a bet is operated automatically by insertion of coins or tokens or notes

into a receiving mechanism by the punter.

21. A betting system comprising a punter operable machine, such machine incorporating said means for presentation of a contestant list and the outcome 5 information, a database or memory device, punter operable controls, a coin (or token or note) mechanism, a pay-out mechanism, and a control system incorporating all or part of said selection means for selection from said database or memory device.

10 22. A betting system adapted to be used in a betting establishment incorporating at said location said presentation means at a prominent display position, a database or memory device, operator controls and a control system incorporating all or part of said 15 selection means for selection from said database or memory device.

23. A betting system substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.